

1530
The Religious and Politick Prudence of Hezekiah,
when invaded by the Assyrians, consider'd, and re-
commended in the present Conjunction.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the PARISH CHURCHES of
St. GEORGE in Southwark,

A N D
St. MAGNUS London Bridge,

On SUNDAY the 14th of *October*, 1759.

By *L. HOWARD, D.D.*

Rector of *St. GEORGE's*, Lecturer of *St. MAGNUS*,
and Chaplain to Her ROYAL HIGHNESS
the Princess Dowager of *Wales*.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN Lord Viscount LIGONIER,

CAPTAIN GENERAL of HIS MAJESTY's
Forces, MASTER GENERAL of the Ordnance, and KNIGHT
of the Most Honourable Order of the *Bath*.

MY LORD,

THE publick Rumour of a *French* Invasion becoming every Day more serious, I thought it consistent with my Office to recommend to my Parishioners, a proper Sense of their Duty to His Majesty and their Country, if the Enemy, grown desperate from our glorious Successes, should undertake so daring an Enterprize.

In such a Conjunction, the following Discourse is most humbly offer'd to Your Lordship's Patronage and Protection; as from your high Command, experienc'd Valour, and military Judgement, assisted by the brave Veterans of *Britain*, our Hopes are justly form'd of the Defeat of our threatening and vain-boasting Adversaries.

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DEDICATION.

I wish I had Abilities to give a Merit to this Performance worthy of Your Lordship's Acceptance and Perusal, and was of such Condition in Life, as might give a Countenance also to the Liberty I have taken; but I have the Satisfaction to think that the more private my Station is, the more pleas'd Your Lordship will be with the Opportunity to exercise that Virtue of Humility, which is the Ornament and Proof of a great Mind, and is so natural to Your Lordship.

I have the Honour to be,

My LORD,

Your LORDSHIP'S most humble

and devoted Servant,

L. HOWARD.

2 CHRON. xxxii. Part of the 3d, and following Verses.

Also he strengthened himself, and set Captains of War over the People, and gathered them together to him, and spake comfortably to them, saying,

Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the King of Assyria, nor for all the Multitude that is with him, for there be more with us, than with him.

With him is an Arm of Flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our Battles.

And Hezekiah the King, and the Prophet Isaiah the Son of Amoz prayed and cried to Heaven.

And the Lord sent an Angel, which cut off all the Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria, who returned with Shame of Face to his own Land.

IN this Book of the Chronicles we have a very particular and affecting Account of the Actions and Reign of *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*, of his Zeal to restore the Worship of the true God, and reform his Country from Idolatry and Pagan Superstition; instead of beginning his Reign with *doing Evil in the Sight of the Lord*, he very wisely and prudently resolved to make him his Friend, for he knew it was vain for him to trust to his *Bow*, that it was not his *Arrow* could save him, without his Divine Aid and Assistance; nor was his Zeal only, but his *Sincerity* remarkable; there was no Ostentation nor Vain-glory like *Jehu's* in this Conduct of *Hezekiah*, for the former Chapter concludes, that *whatever he did, he did with all his Heart, and prospered.*

It may seem strange, at the first View, that God, whom he had thus zealously serv'd, should throw such a dark Shade into his

his Affairs, as we are inform'd of in the First Verse of this Chapter; that such a national Calamity shou'd befall him after the Reformation he had perfected, and *Sennacherib* the idolatrous King of *Assyria* be permitted to come into *Judah* and encamp against him: But God was willing to enlarge *Hezekiah's* View and Knowledge of his Divine Attributes, and give him most affecting and feeling Instances and Demonstrations of his Almighty Power and Mercy; that instead of the *dumb Idols* which his Predecessor and People had ignorantly and wickedly worship'd, that he had brought them home to that God who was *mighty in Operation*, as well as *infinite in Mercy and Goodness*; he was therefore pleas'd to change the Scene in order to try his Faith and Stedfastness, and whether the afflicted, the invaded, and insulted King of *Judah*, would persevere in that Religion and Virtue which had hitherto been so conspicuous in his Conduct. It might be likewise another End of Divine Providence in this Dispensation, to let him experience some of the Sorrows which Sin had introduced into this *Valley of Tears*, and that Men of whatever Degree or Station, Princes or Peasants, are *born to Trouble*, as the Sparks fly upwards. When all Things go well we are too apt to go wrong, to be swell'd beyond the proper Size of dependent Creatureship, and in an Affluence of Fortune and Prosperity, to be so dazzled with the bright Sunshine as not to see God, and know that there is a Divine Power above us; it has been sensibly observ'd, that it is a dangerous Thing to live constantly in a *Paradise* of worldly Delights and Satisfactions, because in every such *Paradise* there lurks a *tempting Serpent*.

Upon the Tidings of this *Assyrian* Invasion, we perceive him taking the wisest Steps and most *prudential* Measures to defeat the Designs of his Enemies, and render such Invasion vain and fruitless; he advis'd with his PRINCES and MIGHTY MEN to stop the WATERS of the *Fountains*, whose Current he diverted by subterraneous Passages, so that the Use of them was retained to his People, but taken away from the Enemy; from which *prudent Policy* he wisely judg'd that the *Assyrian* Army would suffer extremely for the Want of those diverted Streams. This Conduct of *Hezekiah* is quoted by the Prophet *Isaiah* to the *Jews* in their Invasion by the *Persians*, who in the 9th Verse of the

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the 22d Chapter of his Prophecy, thus speaks to and upbraids those political but sinful People—You imitate, by reason of your *Fear*, *Hezekiah's* Prudence against the *Affyrians*, in cutting off the *Waters from his Enemies*, but you do not resemble him in his *Faith*, who also had *Recourse to God by Prayer and Humiliation*.

We read in the 5th Verse of his *strengthening himself*, of the military Preparations which he made, and of his Encouragement of his People not to fear the proud, idolatrous, and to use a modern Term, *Gasconading* *Affyrians*; that he exhorted his People in their Consternation to put their Trust and Confidence in God; *Be strong*, says he, *and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the King of Affyria, nor for the Multitude that is with him, for there be more with us than with him. With him is an Arm of Flesh*, that is, worldly Power and human Strength only, but *with us is the Lord our God*, that everlasting Spirit, with supernatural Strength to *help us and to fight our Battles*.

Thus political and prudent was *Hezekiah*, using all lawful Means of Defence, and then calling a sort of spiritual Council, and joining with *Isaiah* the Son of *Amos* a Prophet of the Lord in Prayers and Cries to Heaven for Deliverance; the happy Consequence of which *Faith and Devotion* was, *that the Lord sent an Angel which cut off all the mighty Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Affyria, who returned with Shame of Face to his own Land*.

In further discoursing upon this Scripture I shall take the Opportunity of setting forth and recommending to your Practice, the very necessary and excellent Virtue of PRUDENCE, in the private and common Affairs of Life; since those that are not *prudent in little* cannot be expected to be so in *greater Matters*, nor the *imprudent Man* in his *own Affairs*, be judged qualified for the Trust and Management of national Concerns. I shall then set forth and recommend, the Excellency and Usefulness of that publick, national, and POLITICAL PRUDENCE, which is requisite with regard to Kingdoms and States in all dangerous and critical Conjunctions. And in the last Place I shall shew, that, tho' such publick and *political Prudence*, such judicious and discreet Measures are not to be neglected, that they will be found insignificant and unavailing to the End proposed, without the additional Wisdom.

dom and Discretion of applying to God by *Prayer* and *Supplication*, for his Divine Aid and Assistance. But first I am to take this Opportunity to set forth and recommend the virtue of PRUDENCE in GENERAL; that there is a Discretion and self-preserving Care and Watchfulness necessary in *private Life*; and, amongst other Reasons, because, as, in the *publick one*, we are liable to many *Attacks* and INVASIONS.

The World is full of Invading and sinful Temptations, to shake the moral Frame and Disposition of our Minds, and by overthrowing our Virtue, to destroy, enslave, and make us miserable and unhappy. With what Variety of Assaults is the little Citadel of Man besieged and *invaded*; base and insinuating Corruption, powerful Interest and Ambition, make their Attempts upon and invade our Virtue, our Honour and Integrity, and strive to force us out of the good Principles we may have imbibed by Education, and the sweet and pleasant Path of Innocence, Ease and Contentment.

—There is not a Virtue we possess but is liable to the *Invasion* of some opposite and captivating Vice, and so depraved and strong are our Passions, so bias'd our Nature to sensual Pleasures and Enjoyments, that as we take a larger View and Taste of Life, if it was not for the Exercise, the Guide and Direction of *Prudence* and Discretion, there would be no steering nor passing safely thro' the dangerous Gulph of this ensnaring and seducing World, which is full of its glittering Decoys and Enticements to Vice, and its destructive Consequences.

In the bright Constellation of Virtues and Graces, a *learned Writer* has given place to PRUDENCE, and calls her the Queen and Superintendant of all the rest; that it is the Cause of every Thing that is good, beautiful, proper and decent; and to which I may add, the Hindrance and Prevention of every Thing that is bad, deformed, improper and indecent; that it is the Salt of our Life, to preserve it from Corruption, the Seasoning of our Words and Actions, and the moral and becoming Art, if I may so speak, to square and conduct our Affairs with Advantage to ourselves and others; that as Physick is the Art to prevent and keep off Diseases, as well as to restore Health, so *Prudence* is the noble Science of living and behaving in such a Manner as to avoid running upon those dangerous Sands of Vice, which lie conceal'd in this Sea of Life.

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The World is diligent to find out our particular Passions, and what Price we seem to set upon our Virtue, according to our Capacities it bids for us, and presents the tempting and glittering Object, to make us shrink, if possible, from our Integrity.—It must be confess'd indeed, that nothing is more difficult than the Exercise of *real Prudence*; to pursue their Interests, and raise themselves, Men give into wicked Policies and Schemes, so that after all, we may fail and miscarry. There are, *says a great Man*, Variety of Accidents, Circumstances, Dependencies, Times, Places, and Persons, and the Alteration of *One of them*, may change and render the *whole* prudent System abortive. Vice sometimes steals into the Seat of Virtue; Wrong and Right, Good and Evil, may, from Error in Judgement, or Depravity of Principle, form such seemingly equal Pretences to our Regard and Pursuit, and may bear such *near Resemblances*, that some, especially of the weaker Sort of Men, may think it Wisdom and *Prudence* to follow, what the *wiser few*, of real Understanding and Perspicuity, know *it just* and discreet to avoid.

The Name of *Prudence* may sometimes be given to Cunning and Subtilty, and bad Men have their sly Forecasts and Contrivances, their Art and Dexterity in committing their Iniquities; but the unhappy Events and Consequences of such Conduct often prove it a false and mistaken Prudence. We live in a deprav'd and degenerate Age, where PRUDENCE, the Prop and Pillar of States and Individuals, and Prevention of the Evils of both, meets with general Disesteem and Contempt, and is commonly dismiss our Service when she offers to intrude with her Advice, and interfere with our pleasing and darling Vices.—The wanton Passion of Love, or rather Lust, despises her Cautions, and the Epicure and Drunkard with his luxurious Dainties, and sparkling Glass before him, will not follow the Dictates of *Prudence* to be temperate and sober: Such make the Goodness and Bounty of Providence their wicked Handle of Indulgence and Enjoyment, as they call it, of its *good Things*; and to serve the wicked Turns of their vitiated and debauch'd Tastes, they lay a Stress upon *some Texts* of Scripture, without any Regard to the true Reading of them, and the Restrictions, Qualifications, and Rules of *Prudence*, which are laid down in *others*: From God's giving us *richly Things to enjoy*,
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and that we shou'd *drink our Wine with a merry Heart*, they take their wide Latitude of Sensuality and Excess, without any Recollection of the Apostle's Injunction to let our *Moderation* be known unto all Men, and *use this World as not abusing it*; which Texts intimate that PRUDENCE and Temperance should attend us, and be One of our Companions in all joyous Meetings and Assemblies, as a necessary Watch over our Words and Actions.

For want of the *leading* and supporting *Strings* of PRUDENCE, how many Men like little weak Children have their Falls and Bruises; how do Youth set out well in the Journey of Life, give the pleasing Hopes of their succeeding in the Callings and Professions which their tender and careful Parents provide for them; how many depart from their Father's House in the Whiteness and Purity of Innocence, but return with the Spots and Impurities of Vice, with the Loss of Character and Fortune, and in that shatter'd and disgraceful State and Condition, from which *Prudence*, if they had regarded her Maxims, would have preserved them.—The want of this Virtue and Safeguard of Man appears in every Prison and deplorable State of Life, where dejected Looks, many Wants, and general Contempt, shew the unhappy Departure of Prudence and Discretion.

From the Necessity and Consequences of *Prudence* in private Life, I shall now proceed to set forth that wise and *politick Prudence* which we have in *Hezekiah* a royal and illustrious Example of. And here, I shall first shew, That there is a POLITICAL PRUDENCE necessary in Individuals as well as Kingdoms and States, I mean the *Prudence* to be *quiet* and mind *our own Business*, the Prudence of Taciturnity and Modesty, and to avoid speaking Evil of Power, when we cannot, in the Nature of Things, be suppos'd Judges of the secret and necessary Springs of Government.

It is certainly imprudent, and argues an high Degree of Presumption, to censure the Actions of those who move in the upper Spheres of Life, and particularly of those who touch the principal Springs and Wheels that set the grand Machine of Government in Motion; for we cannot as we stand at a great Distance discern their several Connections, the Relations they bear
to

to other Things, which must be scan'd with Nicety, before we can venture, either with *Prudence* or *good Sense*, to pronounce peremptorily upon a great Man's Conduct.

An Action may be seen in many disadvantageous Points of View; it may appear rash, tho' it results from cool Deliberation, and the most unimpeachable Discretion; it may appear unjust, tho' it has been *weigh'd* in the Scales of Justice, and nothing has been *found wanting*; it may seem to have been concerted with some ambitious, interested, or sinister Design, tho' calculated for the true Interests of a Government, and built upon the most solid Principles of Patriotism: The Reason of this is unavoidable, since the * *Secrecy* with which it is necessary, that Matters relating to the State and Welfare of a Nation must be conducted, and the labour'd Disguises which they must necessarily wear, in order to escape the Observation of those who are interested to decry a Measure, or to counter-act its Operation and Success, *must* always prejudice the Appearance of their Actions, at least in many Instances, and greatly discolour their native and truly genuine Complexion.

Some Men are so deep-sighted, they think, in Politicks, as to talk of many Advantages arising to the Publick, many proper Checks to an Administration, from the Opposition of a contrary Party; but certain I am, many Inconveniences, many Interruptions of the publick Service, many Delays of the Business of a Nation, may arise from it, and especially if it should proceed only from private and ambitious Views. For how may a State suffer all this while? must not the Wheels of Government stand still, or at least move very slowly, while the Interests or Passions of Individuals clash and interfere in such a Manner? while two opposite Parties are pulling different Ways, and are endeavouring to give the Machine such contrary Motions and Directions?—The Conclusion from what has been said is, that it is Wisdom and *Prudence* to unite in Duty and Subjection to Government, and the best Politicks we can Study is to let the Business of the Helm be done with the most Ease and Pleasure by those plac'd there for that Purpose.

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* Nulla meliora concilia, quam quæ ignoraverit adversarius ante quam fierent. VEGET.

When a real Danger threatens us, then 'tis a wise and *politick Prudence* to concern ourselves, and differs greatly from intermeddling at other Times, and being busy, which too often make such unnecessary Politicians launch into *imprudent* Expressions and Invectives against Government, which seldom do Good to the State, and are frequently prejudicial and ruinous to themselves. I come now to that *national*, publick, and *politick Prudence* and wise Measures of Defence, which should be observ'd and taken in all such dangerous and critical Conjunctions, as may now have given some little Alarm, but I hope no cowardly Fears to this brave Island.

We are under the Threatnings of an Invasion from our Enemies, who, Thanks be to God for his going forth with our *Fleets* and *Armies*, for the many glorious Successes and Conquests of this War, from his Divine Assistance of our prudent Endeavours and Armaments, seem reduc'd to this wretched, foolish, absurd, and to them, I doubt not, fatal Expedient. But notwithstanding the seeming Impossibility, or at least Improbability of any Success in their Attempts against us, the more serious we become, and the more PRUDENT we are to prepare and guard against them, the more easily shall we disappoint them in their Views, and in the Words of my Text, make them, if they should venture a Descent, pursue the dangerous Extreme which their Circumstances may put them upon, ~~and~~ return with *Shame of Face to their own Land*.

Tho' from a national Affection to his Majesty's Person, Family and Government, from the Fidelity and united Hearts of his People, from the Wisdom of our Councils, and approved Bravery of our Troops, and of our Naval Commanders and dauntless Sailors, little Danger of Success is to be apprehended from their Attempts; yet Inactivity, Carelessness and Remissness in using proper and *prudential* Means and Preparations for our Defence, would be a Reflexion on our National Wisdom and State Policy, as well as displeasing to God, who orders in Temporal as well as spiritual Affairs, that no *Talent of Man* should be *hid in a Napkin*, nor any Power and Strength which he kindly gives to Kingdoms and States, be imprudently neglected and omitted.

It is the Custom and Folly of too many to make a Jest of and sport with seemingly distant Dangers, which the nearer Approach of, and the Hazard of their darling Riches, would cause to start and tremble, and who for the most Part would be as dastardly if such Calamity should come upon them, as they are seemingly bold and courageous when they imagine them to be only Rumour and Report.

It is the Part of Prudence, in order to quicken a Nation's Endeavours, animate its Zeal, and hasten its Preparations, to consider Consequences, if any Schemes which their Enemies form should succeed: * *A wise Man* always places the bad as well as good, the foul as well as fair Prospect of Affairs before him, and recollects what *may*, tho' he is not so fearful, and *mean-hearted* as to conclude it *will* happen; but however, he prepares against the worst, and is careful and *prudent* to guard and defend his Country.

It is our Happiness, and one Foundation of our Hopes and Success, that *Justice* has marched with and accompany'd the Valour of our Fleets and Armies. War, says a great Author, like other Pursuits and Engagements, hath its just Laws and Ordinances, God favoureth honest Warriors, and as Justice as well as Mercy is the Attribute of that pure Being, he may be expected to give the Victory to those that act most agreeably to his Nature and Disposition; therefore it is the Duty as well as *Politick Prudence* of States to make themselves capable of his Divine Favour, and Blessing, by the Justice and Equity of their warlike Enterprises.

A learned Man on this Subject has observ'd, that Triumphs and Laurels are not to be sought or fought for on every Occasion, and that the Effusion of Christian Blood, the Cries of Widows and Orphans, and the sundry Desolations in, and Calamities proceeding from Fields of Battle and Slaughter, are very moving and affecting Considerations, in the midst of Victories, Triumphs, and Successes. A War is not to be entered into *nor* undertaken, but upon good and proper Motives; Pride and Ambition, universal Monarchy, and a Desire to bring all Nations into Captivity and Obedience to their Yoke of Government, are unjustifiable Reasons for War.—To break the Faith of Treaties and Alliances,

* Frequentissimum initium calamitatis securitas, nemo celerius opprimitur quam qui non timet.

Alliances, are Reasons which Prudence dictates for taking Arms; it is a necessary War to redress an injured Country's Insults and Depredations, and is to be justified by all the Rules and Arguments of Reason and Religion.

Self-defence is a *Prudence*, if I may so observe, amongst Barbarians, and is a Law of Nature given by the Creator to poor Beasts and Savages, how much more to rational Creatures. As our War then has Justice and Self-defence for its Vindication, permit me to speak comfortably to the People of this Land; *Be strong and courageous, be not afraid or dismayed at the publick Rumour of a French Invasion, nor for all the Multitude that may come; for there be more with us than with them: for with them is an Arm of Flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our Battles: tho' they cry with the loud Voices of Vain-boasting and Assyrian Threatnings, to affright, if possible, and trouble weak Minds, yet from the experienced Goodness of God to this Country, and from the glorious Proofs we have in this War received, that He is with us, tho' an Host of Men are against us yet will not our Hearts be afraid; and tho' there rise up War against us, yet will we put our Trust in him.*

The good *Hezekiah* was, and it becomes us to be *prudent* and circumspect, to use all lawful Measures to annoy our Enemies, and to deprive them of those Means of Help and Assistance which may favour their bold and daring Enterprize, and to intercept them in all their Schemes; it becomes us to strengthen ourselves, and set *Captains of War* over the People, and *gather ourselves together*, if they should invade us, to the ROYAL STANDARD of our great, our good, our warlike and courageous KING whose long Reign over us, has been most mild and gentle, and the Justice of whose Government is so inviting to, and will be attended. I am persuaded, with general Fidelity, Zeal, and Affection.

In all dangerous and critical Affairs of State, the Prudence and wise Policy, accompany'd with the Piety and Devotion in my Text, should be recollected and imitated; we are to make use of every Opportunity that seems to favour our Proceedings, nor let any Thing slip which a wise and good Providence seems to throw in our Way. As Times of War and Campaigns will always be attended with various Rumours and Reports, 'tis the Prudence and

and Policy of wise States, to promote if possible some good, and endeavour diligently, and in Time, to prevent any ill Effect from them; and that is by authoritative Information, which in any bad Tidings shews the Honesty of a State, and in good ones the Pleasure it takes to encourage and raise the drooping Minds of a People. But let not popular Reports, and uncertain Rumours, or Inventions of ill minded Men, ever stagger our Resolution, nor damp our Zeal for our Country; let them not stop our prudent Course, but let us be firm to what Reason, Discretion, and our own Honour and Regard to our Country, dictate Perseverance in. On the other Hand, let not Rashness and a *Sort of volatile* Behaviour, attend any Proceeding of a grave and serious Nature; for there is a prudent Care and Caution which may *seem to be*, but is not FEAR; * Nothing with Prudence or Safety is to be *despised* in an *Enemy*, nor any Measures omitted, to withstand his Efforts, however we may think them, weak or absurd.

A great Writer of our own puts the wise Caution in his Hero's Mouth to appear, *nor rash nor diffident*; and as, to make Feints in Battle is a Part of good Generalship, so in troublesome Times, in the Necessity of publick Affairs, when the Enemy strives, by Subtilty and Deceit, as well as Power, to conquer; and when it is not only to procure a great Good, but to prevent a great Mischief to our Country, from such as are known to be faithless and deceiving; in such Case we should use their own Weapons, and as our blessed Saviour advises his Disciples, to be *wise as Serpents*, which is no Departure from the *Harmlessness of the Dove*. Thus have I set forth, and added to Prudence in general, that national *Discretion* and *wise Policy*, which the Exigency of publick Affairs, and especially such as my Text recites, the Threatnings and Invasions of an Enemy, particularly require.

But after the Exercise of this proper, publick, and politick Prudence, I must now take the Liberty in the last Place to press and exhort you to the Conduct of the religious, as well as courageous and prudent King of *Judah*, viz. to be, as a brave Man once said *in publick*, neither *ashamed to pray*, nor *afraid to fight*, but to cry to the God of Heaven; which was in *Hezekiah's* Insult from the *Assyrians*, his pious Practice, and will be the likeliest Method to succeed,

* Nil tuto in Hoste despicitur.

succeed, and be preserved in all similar Circumstances of Danger; for my Text concludes (nor need we doubt of the same merciful Providence if we follow his Example) that *when Hezekiah the King, and the Prophet Isaiah the Son of Amoz prayed and cried to Heaven, the Lord sent an Angel which cut off all the Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria, and he returned with Shame of Face to his own Land.*

The Inferences from what has been said, are very easy and natural; That as all the necessary and politick *Prudence* which I have endeavour'd to define and recommend has been so zealously and faithfully exercised by our active and vigilant Government, by the Wisdom and Virtue so gloriously remarkable in His Majesty's Councils and Deliberations, and by our powerful Preparations to meet, encounter, and drive back, this *menacing Host*, if they should presumptuously attempt to invade this Country; it only remains that all of us in our respective Provinces shou'd follow the Example of *Hezekiah's* Nobles and People in my Text, who did all in their Power to *help him*; who *assembled* themselves in the Service of him and their Country, and were most willing, ready, and desirous, to throw the many *Darts*, and put on the *Shields* and *Bucklers*, which we read in this Chapter, were made for them in their national Danger and Extremity.

It is to be hoped that all that are *able*, will be *willing* to take Arms for the Preservation of their *King*, their Country, their religious and civil Liberties, their Property, their Families, their innocent Children, and every Thing dear and valuable to Britons, if our Enemies shou'd proceed in their mischievous Designs; and as *Isaiab* the Son of *Amoz*, the Minister and Prophet of the Lord, and spiritual and faithful Friend and Subject of *Hezekiab*, join'd with him in Prayers and Cries to Heaven in the Extremity of his Affairs, from the Threatning and Invasion of the idolatrous *Sennacherib* and his Army, 'tis to be hoped, and I think need not be doubted, that every Minister of Christ in his respective Parish, and Cure of Souls, will preach, and privately practise the Duties of Prayer and Devotion to the God of Nations, that he would preserve and protect us; to which we should add a national Repentance, Humiliation, and Reformation of Manners.

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As it cannot be denied that we are a sinful People, that Vices and Immoralities, with that horrid Cursing and Swearing, unhappily abound, for which we are assur'd from God's Word, *a Land mourneth*; HOW *shall we come, or wherewithal bow ourselves before the Lord?* But there is a Virtue which *hideth a Multitude of Sins*, and which, Thanks be to God, is in fashion amongst us, and become the *pious Taste* of the Age; CHARITY, with her numerous distress'd Offspring, is favour'd with Persons of the HIGHEST QUALITY, RANK, and CONDITION, at the Head of her melancholy and moving List of Objects. It affords us a pleasing *Hope* of *God being with us and fighting our Battles*, when we reflect on the many exalted Benefactions and charitable Foundations of this compassionate Country, and especially of our great Metropolis and its Suburbs; nor can we doubt but the God of all Mercies, the Divine Patron of Charity, will accept of them as *Christian Peace Offerings*, and that they will be in any Frown of Providence, irresistible Pleas for Deliverance, and a Continuance of his Blessings. Permit me then, in order to strengthen our Hopes in God, to mention some of those *Christian Sacrifices* with which *he is pleased*.

HERE the LUNATICK, * an Object which stands in the foremost Rank of Distress, has all the Skill and Benefit of PHYSICK, LEARNING and Study, to cool his poor distemper'd Brain, and to recloath his Mind with that *Reason* which is unhappily departed from him. The FRANTICK and RAVING are restrain'd from the *outrageous Sallies* and dangerous Consequences of their *unmeaning Mischiefs*. HERE *Humanity* is shewn to poor Wretches, who are divested of it, and of every Quality and Endowment of the rational Creature, retaining only the Forms and Figures of Men. HERE the DEJECTED Objects of such Distress, the MELANCHOLY and DESPAIRING, who from VAPOUR'D IMAGINATIONS, the Forerunners of Madness, or from the Seizure of the Brain by pressing Misfortunes and Necessities, are driven into *irrational and frightful HORRORS*; these are assisted and comforted with such medicinal Helps and Means of Cure, as gradually give Hopes of their Recovery to a Sobriety of Reflection. This is a CHARITY which soars to the very Height of Beneficence, and must be pleasing to that SUPREAM BEING;
C who

* Bethlem Hospital.

who enlightens the Mind of Man with Wisdom and discreet Knowledge, and whenever he pleases clouds the Judgement and Understanding, till *Idiocy* or *Madness* proceed from such afflicting Dispensations of his Almighty Power. But he creates no *Deformity* of Mind or Body for the *Sport*, but to move the tender Dispositions of his Creatures; He orders it for some secret and infinitely Divine Purpose of his unfathomable Wisdom, and must receive great Satisfaction from a charitable Regard to such miserable Objects.

It is another * NATIONAL CHARITY, recommendatory I doubt not to the Favour of God, that such a *Multitude* of little DESTITUTE INNOCENTS, the Children of unfortunate or wicked and unnatural Parents, are brought up *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, and are rescu'd from the Snares, Temptations, and Ruins of Idleness and Vagrancy; the *annual* and beautiful Appearance of which poor Children, such Spring Blossoms in the *Church*, call'd, by a pious and learned Man, the *Garden of Christ*, is a Sight which nothing can excel, but the glorious *Assembly of the First-born* in those blissful Regions, where, in our Saviour's Words, the *Angels of his little Ones* do continually behold *the Face of their Father which is in Heaven*.

The last Branch of *National Charity* which I shall mention, till I come to those which seem more connected with my present Subject, is that † excellent and noble Foundation, now in its Infancy of Beneficence, for the Refuge, Maintenance, and religious and prudent Education of poor, little, female Orphans, or other distress'd Children of that tender Sex, whose Form is often their Undoing, and of whom this is *their* propos'd, and I heartily pray may be encourag'd, *Relief*, from the Temptations of Necessity, and from the glittering and vicious Baits of lewd Profligates and Debauchees; who are basely and dishonourably assiduous, to catch blooming Innocence and Virtue, and rob them of Esteem and Character; which being lost, that lovely Part of God's Creation is degraded, and brought to the Shame, Ruin, and unnatural Boldness of Prostitution and Infamy. To *change the Skin of the Ethiopian*, or take out the *Spots of the Leopard*, to force or persuade them to *do well*, who have been *accustom'd to do Evil*, is a Task which the Word of God proclaims difficult, tho' I honour the *present Attempt* of it, and think it
pious

* Charity Schools.

† The Asylum in St. George's Fields.

pious and truly meritorious; but as a Disease is much easier prevented than cur'd, how rational as well as charitable a Plan doth it appear, to *train up Children* in the Path of Virtue and Chastity, to rivet in their Minds the Fear of God, and the Excellency of a good Name, which by his *restraining Grace*, added to such early Tuition in Righteousness, they will not *depart from*; this must greatly tend to the Honesty and Fidelity of *Servitude*, and consequently to the Good of the Community. How *comfortably* then, like *Hezekiah*, may we speak to this charitable Country, and how fearless may they be of any Schemes of the Enemy, who thus *let their Light so shine before Men*, that they may *see their good Works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven!*

And this brings me to speak of some National Charities more immediately connected with my subject, and very proper for the Consideration and Encouragement of those brave and loyal Subjects who shall enter into His Majesty's Army, and enlist for the Defence, Glory, and Honour of their Country: And first, in so glorious a Cause, if they *fall*, they will rise with *never-fading Laurels*, and be happy, and flourish eternally with the blessed CAPTAIN OF THEIR SALVATION in his heavenly Kingdom; if they *survive*, what a † charitable Provision is made for the wounded, worn out, and brave Veterans, whose Souls and Bodies are amply and generously taken Care of; who have an Opportunity to worship and serve the GREAT God who has *cover'd their Heads in the Day of Battle*; who in the Decline of Life receive bodily Ease and Nourishment, and in a delightful Habitation, the greatly-merited Amends for their past Dangers and honourable Scars.

Nor is there wanting * another charitable and magnificent Retreat for disabled and maim'd Seamen, those valuable and useful People, who seem cast in a *particular Mould of Providence* for their glorious Toil and Employment; whose Ships, which they so skilfully and chearfully steer and navigate thro' foaming Waves, and tempestuous Winds, may be justly stiled the FLOATING CASTLES, FORTS, and BULWARKS of this Island; who fear no Danger, nor Death, for the Honour of their Royal Master's and Country's Flag, and whose *honest Hearts* and able Hands are always ready to maintain his Sovereignty, under God, of the wide Ocean; to conquer the Foes, and enlarge the Commerce, of *Great Britain*;

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to

† *Chelsea Hospital.** *Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich.*

to secure her Coasts, defend her from all Insults and Invasions, and drive them, like the idolatrous and superstitious *Assyrians*, with *Shame of Face to their own Land*. Nor has the Care of Government been wanting to them whilst in their Station and Service, by affording them those INSTRUMENTS for a thorough Passage of AIR, which have been the Contrivance, Study, and Pains, of that || EMINENT and LEARNED DIVINE, the NEWTON of the present Age, and which have been experimentally prov'd so conducive to their Health, and such Preservatives of their Food from nauseous and devouring Vermin.

What an unspeakable Pleasure must these exalted Charities of a Government give their Commanders, or rather *affectionate Friends*, as I hope, and doubt not, they are in general, to their *Brethren*, tho' *Inferiors*, to whose maritime Skill, Obedience, and Diligence, their own Safety and Lives are owing; and particularly, how pleasing must these Charities be to that great and † BRAVE OFFICER whose Generosity and Goodness of Heart feels the Joys and Griefs of all under his Command, of those brave People and Companions of his Dangers and Labours for his Country's Honour; who have followed his judicious Orders and courageous Example to the glorious Victories and Conquests he has obtained in this successful War.

And now what remains, but that a Sense of all these Things which have been consider'd, apply'd, and recommended in this Discourse, from the prudent and religious Conduct of *Hezekiah* and his People, when threatened and *invaded* by the *Assyrians*, be riveted in our Hearts and Memories; that *human Prudence* may direct, and the *spiritual Discretion* of Devotion guide us to God's Throne of Grace, and, in Consequence, to his divine Blessing and Success; that War and Blood-shed may cease, and soon terminate in a glorious, honourable, and LASTING PEACE; that, if I may be allow'd to borrow from the History of once *Brave Rome*, now lost by Luxuries and Effeminacies, The *Temple of Janus* may be so shut by our GREAT AUGUSTUS, that no haughty, ambitious, nor faithless Powers may again open it.

For these Purposes, and to procure these happy Events, let us, like *Hezekiah*, *walk before God in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and do that which is good in his Sight*.

How

How many Things hath God done for us? What Subjects of Triumph are mix'd with the *Rumour of this Invasion*, to dissipate all unmanly Fears and Distrusts? how wonderful have been the glorious Successes of this Year? 'Tis true indeed ~~that all sublunary Pleasures have a Mixture of Pain~~, that the fairest Horizon is suddenly overcast, and that all our Pleasures have an Allay of Grief: *BRITAIN* conquer'd at *QUEBECK*, but *WOLFE FELL*! and we must have been insensibly unaffected with our COUNTRY'S LOSS in that BRAVE MAN, if the NATIONAL JOY had not receiv'd *some Check*, if SOME GENEROUS CONCERN had not appear'd for that melancholy Event.

In such a *Choice* of Blessings, as we have been favour'd with this War, to use the beautiful Expression of the great and fallen General just now mention'd and lamented, I know not where to fix my Object of Praise and Thanksgiving; *what shall we render unto the Lord for all these Benefits he hath done unto us?* which of his *greatest Enemies* shall we sacrifice? what *monstrous Sin* shall we mortify? what *darling Lust* and *Passion* shall we subdue? let us honour him by adhering to his Laws which we may have formerly broke, and give him the *acceptable Thanks* of our *Reformation*. Let us not be *Evil* because he is *Good*, take an unnatural Liberty from his Favours to offend him, and be more *presumptuous* and *bold* in our Vices, because his Grace and Mercy have abounded. There is no Sin so *beinous* but *Ingratitude* will *heighten* and give an *Aggravation* to: 'Tis generous and noble to amend our Lives with our Conditions; the greater we grow, the Son of *Sirach* advises, *to humble ourselves the more*. If it was well said by *David*, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted*, how much better and happier will it be for the People of this Country, to say, from an Experience of such national Mercies, it is *good for us* that we have *succeeded* and been deliver'd; for now we are *charm'd* and *mov'd* by *Gratitude* as well as *Inclination*, to keep the Statutes of our great Friend and mighty Deliverer. Better and more honourable is it to be led into our Duty by God's favourable Dispensations, than to be driven and forced into a Sight of our Follies and Offences, by the severe Strokes of Divine Fury and Displeasure.

Let us in this critical Conjunction, not be under any Apprehensions of these threatening and haughty ASSYRIANS, nor fear any *Enemies* so much as *our Sins*; they only can turn the

Face

Face of the Lord from us ; but our Prayers, like good *Hezekiah's* and the Prophet's, and *bringing forth* the *Fruits meet for Repentance*, will give our Coasts the additional and sure Guard of God's Divine Protection, of his careful and overruling Providence.

Our Enemies have long envy'd the Freedom, Riches, and extensive Commerce of this little brave Island ; and the Subversion of our religious and civil Rights, has long been the Object of their Hatred and Perfidy ; their Chains of Slavery, and Tortures of Persecution have frequently been prepar'd ; but God has not given us over *for a Prey unto their Teeth* ; he has miraculously preserv'd us, made us able to preserve others, and be the Bulwark of the Protestant Cause throughout *Europe*. Let us be warm'd and melted by such Blessings, to the Worship and Adoration of his most Holy Name, and let us submit in all Events to his Will. No one is so valiant as he that dares to be good when the Days are evil, and bravely scorns to be wicked, and forget his Divine Benefactor, to *deny God*, and say, *Who is the Lord?* when the Times are prosperous.

As the greatest Good and the greatest Evil proceed from the Force of Example, let those in *high Life*, great and rich Men of Earth, join in the PIETY and RELIGIOUS PRUDENCE of the King, and Administration, who have order'd publick Praises and Thanksgivings to God, and that People of all Ranks and Conditions shou'd *be told* of, and gratefully acknowledge *the Things* which he hath done ; let there be no more Occasion to lament *the spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, but the richer and greater we are, let it remind us of God's bountiful Providence, and make us more and more exemplary and virtuous in our Lives and Conversations. When great Men are wicked, the low Class of Mankind, who follow their Superiors in all Modes and Fashions, will imitate them in their Vices ; if such SUNS are eclips'd, the *lesser Stars* will lose their Light and Splendour. Let then the Goodness of God lead us all, high and low, rich and poor, to Repentance and Amendment, and then *let us not fear what Man can do unto us*.

In all our Words and Actions, in all Speeches and Deliberations in Councils, in all our publick Prayers and Supplications, our devout Praises and Thanksgivings ; to compleat our Duty and our Happiness, let *brotherly Love* and good Will, domestick Union and Harmony, continue ; and as God's People of old

were commanded to *love the Stranger*, for they were *Strangers* in the Land of *Egypt*, as Love is a universal Duty, and only shut up and confin'd in low, narrow, and groveling Minds, let our Prayers be sent up to the Mercy-Seat of Heaven, for our distress'd *Protestant Brethren* abroad, suffering in the bloody Spot and Seat of War, and in the great Spoils and Desolations of military Exactions and Plunders. Let our brotherly Concern and Affection be visible for that BRAVE PEOPLE, and PROTESTANT COUNTRY connected with us in a FELLOWSHIP of Subjection to the same ROYAL HEAD and SOVEREIGN; and whose Sufferings and Desolations in OUR War, for OUR Wrongs, and whose brave Engagements in the same COMMON CAUSE, and against the same COMMON ENEMY, increase the Obligations of our Regard, Respect, and Humanity, towards them; and let THEIR and OUR Success under an ILLUSTRIOUS AND VICTORIOUS LEADER, in Conjunction with our valiant *British* Troops, be another Subject of Praise and Thanksgiving; nor let us forget our Prayers to God for the Safety and Success of that GREAT PRINCE our glorious Protestant Ally, who in such Perils, and against such Numbers, has so often been victorious, or when oblig'd to retreat, has done it with the greatest Honour and Generalship.

And now after all these publick Mercies, let the suppling Oil of Christianity be apply'd to all festering Wounds of Party Heat and Animosities; if any Embers remain, that they may never again break out, disturb the publick Peace and Tranquillity, and produce Clamour and Uneasiness; let us all go forth against the Enemy with Courage and Trust in God, if they attempt to drive us from our *own Vines, and our own Figtrees*, which we now quietly and unmolestedly sit under; let His SACRED MAJESTY, the ROYAL and HOPEFUL HEIR APPARENT of His Crown, and every illustrious Branch of His Family, be the Objects of our Affection and dutiful Regard; and let us always remember, with becoming Gratitude, that valiant, active, and ROYAL HERO, who in the last horrid and unnatural Rebellion, in the severest Season, and with glorious Toils and Fatigues, fought and conquer'd in His ROYAL PARENT'S and COUNTRY'S CAUSE, in the ever memorable Defeat of the Rebels at *Culloden*.

Im

* Prince Ferdinand. † King of Prussia.

In a Word; let it be the noble Emulation of BRITONS in any INVASION, to vye with each other in Zeal and Attachment to the Government and excellent Constitution of this Country; and let the generous Example, Loyalty, and Bounty of this GREAT and OPULENT METROPOLIS, and its NEIGHBOURING CITY, the Spot of NOBLE RESIDENCE, encourage all good Subjects to arm for ENGLAND AND LIBERTY.

I shall conclude this Discourse with the Words and prudent Advice of St. Paul to the Ephesians, *which seem to be raising a sort of SPIRITUAL MILITIA: Take unto you the whole ARMOUR of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil Day. Let your LOINS BE GIRT ABOUT with Truth, and put on the BREAST-PLATE of Righteousness, having your FEET SHOD with the PREPARATION of the Gospel of Peace; above all, take the SHIELD OF FAITH, whereby ye shall be able to quench all the FIERY DARTS of the Wicked; and take the HELMET of Salvation, and the SWORD of the SPIRIT which is the Word of God, praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance.*

F I N I S.

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E R R A T.

In p. 5. l. 4. read for Integrity — Noble Resolutions.